

The

Non-Subscribing

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All Contributions should be forwarded to the Editor, Ardeen, Cadogan Park, Belfast, not later than the 16th.

LOST SHEEP.

Is God the God of the good only, or is he also the God of the wicked? God indeed looks, we may believe, with peculiar approval on the holy, upright, and disinterested. But he does not desire spiritual perfection and eternal happiness for them, more than he does for the most depraved. The Scriptures even seem to represent God as peculiarly interested in the evil. Jesus illustrates God's love to the fallen by the parable of the shepherd, who, having a hundred sheep and losing one, leaves the ninety and nine, to go after that which is lost, and he adds, there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety nine just persons that need no repentance! The good do not and ought not to absorb God's love. For the evil have within them equal capacities of goodness. In all men lies, however hidden, an infinitely precious germ of love and holiness waiting to be quickened. And to the all-seeing eye this is never lost. It calls forth unutterable love. Yes! God loves the most evil. We in our conceited purity may withdraw from them, may think it pollution to touch them, many say "Stand off." But God says to his outcast child "Come near."

Do I speak to those who have escaped gross vice? Bless God for your happiness. Rejoice in the propitious circumstances, which have conspired for your safety. But do not feel as if God were exclusively your God. Set up no insuperable barrier between yourself and the fallen. Even if you are inwardly as well as outwardly pure, if you are restrained from self-indulgence, not by external motives, such as custom, opinion, and interest, but by deep abhorrence of evil, do not imagine yourselves peculiarly favourites of God.

In speaking thus of the tenderness due to evil, I have no desire to extenuate guilt, or to break down the distinction between virtue and vice. The distinction is real. We must never confound him who acts from principle with one who is enslaved by passion. That false courtesy, which treats all alike is treachery to God. We ought to look on the base with indignation. But indignation may be blended with an earnest desire to recover the wrong doer. This union of stern rebuke with tenderness we know to be possible, for we experience it towards our children, relatives and friends, when they go astray. We ought to detest vice, whether in ourselves or in those most dear to us. But as we love ourselves while reproving ourselves most bitterly, so should we love our erring fellow-creatures, whilst we frown upon and firmly oppose their sins. Indeed the only true love for the bad is that which abhors their corruption, and seeks to arouse in them a like abhorrence. Love can pierce the conscience like a two-edged sword. No violence of anger is so awful as the calm rebuke of love. The tenderness, that apologises for wickedness, is among the worst forms of cruelty.

W. E. CHANNING.

Notes of the Month.

We have to apologise for the lateness of this issue, which is the result of the printers' strike. Our Printers have done all they can to help and we are lucky to be in a position to publish at all.

* *

We desire to express our deep sympathy with the clerk of the Synod in the heavy losses he has recently sustained. The passing away of his only sister was followed after a brief interval by the death of his only brother. We feel we are voicing the sentiments of our whole Church in tendering him our heart felt condolences.

* *

The motion brought forward at the Synod meetings in June by the Rev. A. Whitford to reprint a life of Dr. Montgomery has revived the interest in this hero of religious liberty. This is shown by the fact that several sermons have recently been delivered on his life and character, and by the demand for copies of the short life, obtainable at the Depository for one penny. One cannot help wondering what attitude he would have taken up in these days of religious intolerance.

* *

It was interesting to learn what a favourable impression Mr. A. L. Agnew made at York Street on his first visit there at the beginning of July. In less than a year he will have completed his training for the ministry and one wonders whether the York Street Congregation would not be well advised to wait for him. It seems such a pity that so many Irishmen are driven to accept churches in England though lack of vacancies in our own country.

It would be a great advantage if all our Irish students could be settled in Irish Churches.

* *

Mr Norman Kirkham has entered upon his duties as Missionary in very abnormal times, and we wish him the success which his fearlessness so richly deserves. If his people display the same loyalty to him as they did to his predecessor he will be happy indeed. Though Stanhope Church remains closed for the present, the services at the Central Hall continue to be well attended. We can only pray that the disturbing conditions may soon come to an end and that the Mission will be able before very long to return to its own Spiritual home.

* *

Attention is called to our growing advertising space which is a considerable help to financing this paper. Business houses like to see advertisements producing good results, so we would ask our readers to help those who help us by making what purchases they can from our advertisers and mentioning the fact that they have been attracted by our advertisement columns. In this way they will help us as well.

We would ask our Readers to support our Advertisers, and to mention this Magazine when obtaining articles.

The Business Agent, the Rev. G. J. Slipper, earnestly asks for the early payment of all outstanding accounts for the Magazine. Some of these are now considerably over-due, and it would greatly facilitate the balancing of the accounts if prompt payment were the practice.

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Young People's Page.

THE FRIEND.

By Rev. Percival Godding.

Not his mother, not his sister, but some people called little Theodore old fashioned. Theodore and his mother were great chums and always together. He was five years old. Cicely his sister was nearly fifteen, and was away at a boarding school. Theodore could not remember his father; but mother told him what a brave, good man he had been. He was a real hero and Theodore meant to grow up like him. I cannot tell you the story now, of how his father won the M.C. Theodore knows the story well and someday perhaps he will tell you. I want to tell you about Theodore himself.

He was often telling his mother (he would tell no one else, I believe) about his Friend. Mother was one you see who understood. Once when they were staying a week-end with an Auntie, Theodore went to another Sunday School; and when he came away he told his mother all about his new experience.

"Mother mine," he said, "we sang a hymn beginning:—

'There's a Friend of little Children
Above the bright blue sky.'

I thought at first it was about my Friend."

"Wasn't it about your Friend then?"

"No, mother mine, my Friend is a *near* Friend. He is always with me. That is why I didn't quite cry when I fell over those steps. It did hurt my ankle, mummy, and I was about to cry but the Friend told me to remember Daddy, and so I didn't. And that is why I don't mind sleeping alone in the dark before you come up. My Friend is with me all the time and tells me it would be silly to be afraid, for light and dark are both alike really."

Well now let me tell you the story I set out to tell.

Theodore was fearfully excited the morning they caught the train for Sandicoves, where they were to spend the long looked for summer holiday. He had

kept his spade and pail from last year, as well as many memories of that delightful time.

The adventure happened on the second day. It was in the afternoon.

"Theodore," said mother, "you stay here and play with the others while I go to the station to meet Cicely."

"Alright, mother. Don't be long."

He was a great favourite with the other children on the beach, for he was so lively and resourceful and full of fun and always good tempered. They were just beginning a game of "hide and seek." First he was on the seeking side. That was fun. You faced the sea, shut your eyes, and counted twenty, while the other side hid; then up and away to find them. He himself had found one little girl who had covered herself all over with seaweed. No, not all over, for the sharp eyes of Theodore had spied a little brown arm, and a wee pink hand holding a spade and pail! Then it was his side's turn to hide. Now, while Theodore was seeking he noticed further along the beach a low stretch of rocks going out to the sea dividing off their part of the shore. Could he get to the other side of that? When they shouted "one!" off his little legs scampered to those rocks, quickly he climbed them, and down the other side. No one else had followed, each had his his own plan. And now, out of sight, Theodore was able to look around for a real hiding place. There was not much beach that side, no sand, nearly all rocks. A little further along and a little up the rocks he spied a cave. He wondered if he could go in there? It wasn't very difficult to climb to it and when he peeped in although it was rather dark, he saw it was a glorious place in which to hide. And in he went.

.....

Those dots mean that a long time has passed, and do you know, while he waited to be found, he had gone fast asleep!

Mother had been away longer than she had intended. She and Cicely had gone up to the house first to leave some parcels there. Then they hurried back to the beach.

"Where is Theodore?" said mother to the children playing.

"We don't know," said one little girl. "He ran away a long time ago, and we thought he had gone to meet you."

Well, here was a to-do. They searched the beach; they went back to the station; they hurried to the house; they went to his favourite shop, and at last they went to the police Barracks. Oh, poor mother and Cicely! Where could he have gone? What-ever had happened to him? They were so, so anxious and worried. Ten o'clock struck, ten o'clock at night, and no Theodore!

Then there was a ring at the front door.

But what of Theodore all this time? He woke up just about tea time, and at first he did not know where he was. Then he remembered, and went to the mouth of the cave. Oh, what a sight! The tide had come in, right up to the mouth of the cave. In fact one wave just then came actually in a little way. Poor Theodore. Looking out he could see nothing but sea and rocks. Not even a boat in sight. He called out that the other children might hear. But no answer! All was quiet save for the splashing and rolling of the waves. Fortunately Theodore knew a little about tides, and he saw by a line of seaweed that the water would not come far into the cave. But what a long time he would have to wait before he could get out and cross those rocks again! What would mother be thinking? Would she find him? Then he began to be frightened. But not for long, for his good Friend was near and then he knew he must just wait patiently. It was a long, long wait and at times he thought the water might come right in. But at last he saw that gradually the tide was receding. It was getting dark though, and he saw the flashes from the lighthouse across the sea. He felt so tired, so hungry, and so anxious. But he was truly a young hero and (so he told me later), his Friend was with him all the time.

Temperance Notes.

This month let us go to the five Continents for our notes.

Africa. Dr. Schweitzer in his book "On the Edge of the Primeval Forest" tells of one of his river journeys in Africa. "On the banks are the ruins of abandoned huts. When I came out here fifteen years ago, said a trader who stood near me, these places were all flourishing villages. And why are they so no longer? I asked. He shrugged his shoulders and said in a low voice, "L' alcohol."

India. The Madras Temperance and Local Option Bill, introduced into the Legislative Council by Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rae, of Ellore, is being pressed forward (May 23rd, 1922), and is very popular. If the Council pass the Bill there will be a great sweep of liquor shops from this part of India.

America. At a farewell dinner to Lord and Lady Astor in New York which was attended by over 1,000 members of the League for Political Education, Lady Astor spoke on Peace and Prohibition. She said:

"I trust the United States will fight the good fight for peace. This can only be gained by understanding, tolerance, and international good will. The United States and Canada by their stand against alcoholism have made a big contribution to the spiritual regeneration of the world. I have heard it said that the rich in America can get all the drink they want while the poor can get none. I have not seen this. But when I balance the result, offset the uplifting of the poor and struggling and the salvation which Prohibition has brought to many wives and children against the alleged degradation of some of the rich, I have no doubt the net result to the country has been good. The general sentiment seems to be that it is the rich not the poor who really get the worst of it. Special workers have told me that the Salvation Army, social societies and Churches now have a greatly reduced task as a result of the dry laws. While glad of the success of

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Prohibition in America, I shall in England support the grant of Local Option to the people."

Australia. Dr. Harvey Sutton, Principal Medical Officer to the New South Wales Education Department, states, "before they reach twelve months of age 8,000 infants die every year in Australia. At least 5,000 of these deaths are preventable—stupid neglect, and what is just as bad, stupid indulgence in liquor."

Asia. She Nemoto's Prohibition Bill for minors passed through the Japanese Parliament, and came into effect on April 1922.

Ireland. The Wexford County Council, a republican body, have unanimously decided (June 1922), to call upon the General Council of the Irish County Councils to inaugurate a campaign for the total prohibition of the manufacture, importation and sale of alcoholic liquors.

P. G.



Non-Subscribing Presbyterians.

The following informing letter appeared under the above heading in the "Larne Times" of May 27th. Mr. Kennedy's desire to let the truth be known concerning our position is one with which we heartily sympathise and therefore we have much pleasure in reproducing here his historical thesis:—

It is well known that in the Plantation of Ulster the Counties of Antrim and Down were very largely populated by Scotchmen—the descendants of Irishmen who migrated to the "Land o' Cakes" in the early centuries. They were mostly Presbyterians, but also many of those English folk called Puritans found refuge or came otherwise to Ireland, and were found in communities in Dublin and other Irish towns. Among those Puritans was a Rev. Thomas Emlyn, who became minister of a congregation of Puritans of one kind or another, independents chiefly, in Dublin. The parents of Emlyn were members of the Church of England, but educated their son for the Nonconformist ministry, and he

relates that while a minister of a small congregation in England the reading of Dr. Sherlock's Vindication of the Trinity shook his faith therein. His opinion in this respect became more pronounced, with the result that when he made an open confession thereof he found himself, after being repudiated by certain ministers assuming to be a presbytery, brought to trial for blasphemy—a Baptist being the promoter. The judge, who was of the Jeffries type, browbeat the prisoner because he would not confess blasphemy, interrupted counsel until the latter refused to continue further, and warned the jury that bishops were present taking note of their conduct. There were seven bishops on the bench, including the Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin, and these right reverend bishops were not like the Christian gentlemen who govern the Episcopal Church now. They were judges presiding in courts of their own, and their failings seldom leaned to the side of mercy. So Emlyn discovered, for he was found guilty, and ordered to pay a fine of £1,000 to the Government, to lie in jail one year certain, and to give bail to be of good behaviour for life. He was confined for two years and some months. The fine, after much pressure, was reduced to £70, but the Archbishop of Armagh insisted on poundage, a shilling in the pound, for the whole fine, but after much difficulty was put off with £20. In addition, there was the degrading orgie of conducting the poor man round the courthouse with a paper attached to his breast setting forth his crimes and misdemeanours.

The outbreak of heresy in Dublin put our Northern fathers in a panic, and in 1705 it was decreed that all candidates for the ministry should sign the Westminster Confession as the confession of their faith. The Presbyterianism introduced by our forefathers was the Presbyterianism of Scotland of the olden school, and different from that found in England. Its principles of faith are admirably expressed in the Solemn League and Covenant which pledged those who took it to endeavour the reformation

of religion throughout the three kingdoms in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government according to the Word of God and the example of the best Reformed Churches. It was this League of Faith, with its direct reliance on the Word of God, and not the Confession of Westminster, which really formed the religious mind of the first Presbyterians of Ulster. This was what they subscribed when they subscribed at all.

In the year mentioned was formed a ministerial club called the Belfast Society, which practically became the Presbytery of Antrim. It was composed of ministers from several Presbyteries, who met for prayer and study of the Scriptures in the original tongues—men who resolved that they would never set their hands either to the Westminster or any other product of mere human wisdom as a profession of their faith. As set forth in the narrative of the Seven Synods, which sat at different times and places from 1720 to 1726, what was called the "Pacific Act" was passed in 1720, which contains the following passages, viz.:—"That such who are to be licensed to preach the Gospel of Christ subscribe the Westminster Confession, as also those who are licensed but have not subscribed be obliged to subscribe before being ordained among us; that if any person called upon to subscribe shall scruple any phrase or phrases in the Confession he shall have to use his own expressions which the Presbytery shall accept, provided they find such person sound in the faith."

The leader of the Non-Subscribers, Halliday, when called to the ministry of the First Presbyterian Church, Belfast, in 1720, refused to renew his subscription in any form, and said:—"I scruple at any and every phrase; not that I disbelieve truths which the Confession contains, but I say Scripture is a sufficient test of orthodoxy, and the only legitimate test." And upon this footing Halliday was ordained by the then Belfast Presbytery. But a sort of permissive signing had been introduced, in virtue of which those who wished might sign voluntarily,

those who objected might refrain—the latter were called Non-Subscribers. Their position was like that of Chillingworth, "The Bible alone." Creeds and confessions at best are but human interpretations of the Bible. Such is the position of Non-Subscribing Presbyterians to-day. Such is our special designation, though we are with some exceptions Unitarian in matters of religion. We are Presbyterians in church government, while holding that differences of opinion should not debar from communion in worship and ordinances.

In 1725 the advocates of the Westminster Confession gathered the Non-Subscribers, who were in different presbyteries, into the Presbytery of Antrim, and in 1726 cut them off from ecclesiastical communion with the Synod. These men and congregations, expelled from the General Synod, adopted six propositions as the foundation principles of the presbytery, which they had proposed as expedients of peace, of which I will quote the beginning of No. 1.—"Our Lord Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the Church, hath by His invariable laws recorded in the New Testament perfectly and sufficiently determined all the conditions and terms which the Christian Church or any part of it . . . ought to comply with in order to their being qualified, received into and continued in external religious communion, &c., &c., ministerial or Christian in the visible church." Such is our position to-day.

J. KENNEDY.



Poet of the Cosmos.

The world has but one poet of the cosmos, and that was Whitman. His mind, his sympathies, sweep through a wider orbit than those of any other. One of our greatest literary critics, who knew him well has said—"I am bold enough to say frankly that I look upon Whitman as the greatest person-

ality—not the greatest intellect, but the most symbolical man, the greatest incarnation of mind, heart and soul, fused and fired by the poetic spirit—that has appeared in the world during the Christian era.” Whatever else “Leaves of Grass” may be, it is not poetry as the world uses that term. It is an inspired utterance, but it does not fall under any of the usual classifications of poetry. Lovers of Whitman no more go to him for poetry than they go to the ocean for the pretty shells and pebbles on the beach. They go to him for contact with his spirit; to be braced and refreshed by his attitude toward life and the universe; for his rebust faith, his world-wide sympathies, for the breadth of his outlook, and the wisdom of his utterances.

Whitman is first and last a seer and a philosopher, but his philosophy is incarnated in a man; it is alive; it breathes and talks and loves and breeds; it nurses the sick and wounded; it makes one the friend and brother of all types of humanity. He gives us one of the greatest lines in literature, when, speaking of an outcast, he says—“Not till the sun excludes you do I exclude you.” That sentence is great enough to do honour to the greatest genius that has ever lived.

Whitman is rapt and thrilled when he looks up to the midnight sky. The scientific aspects of astronomy do not engage him for a moment, any more than they did the old Hebrew Prophets; his science becomes human emotion. He is the human soul matching itself against the starry hosts, coping with them and absorbing them: “This day before dawn I ascended the hill and looked at the crowded heaven, and I said to my spirit, when we become the enfolders of those orbs, and the pleasure and knowledge of everything in them, **shall we be filled and satisfied then?** And my spirit said, **no, we but level that lift to pass and continue beyond.**”

Whitman drew all his poetic, æsthetic and ethical standards from the earth, from the sexuality and impartiality of the universe. Only the widest readers are prepared for their

unorthodox flavour—“I lie abstracted and hear the meanings of things, they are so beautiful. There can be no greatness or power that does not exultate those of the earth. There can be no theory of any account unless it corroborates the theory of the earth. No politics, song, religion, behaviour, or what not, is of any account unless it compare with the amplitude of the Earth, unless it face the exactness, vitality, impartiality, and rectitude of the Earth.”

We all see in Whitman, as we see in Nature, what we bring the means of seeing. A man of strict moral and ethical ideas, according to orthodox and conventional standards, will find Whitman rank with original sin. Is not Nature rank with the same form of evil? Naturalism was the essence of his religion.

“Nothing out of place is good, nothing in its place is bad.” Evil, as we use the term, attends all great things. Evil—some man’s evil—comes out of the sunshine, rain and snow. One of our poets objects to Whitman’s saying that evil is just as perfect as good. Whitman does not say it is just as desirable, but just as perfect. Are not things we all call evil, perfect—snakes, nettles, thorns, etc? Is not a fungus as perfect as a rose? Each obeys its own law. The germs of typhoid fever and of pneumonia are just as perfect as the germs that favour us.

Whitman is often spoken of as America’s Nature poet, and his “Song of the Open Road” is frequently printed as part of the lore of the wayfarer. It is a fine nature poem, but those who take it simply as a nature poem, and nothing else, miss the greater part of its beauty and meaning. They miss as much as they would miss if they took Christ’s parable of the sower simply, as an essay in farming, or Omar’s poem as a drinking song; just as in the story of the sower, the field is the world, and the seed is the word of the prophets, and as in the lines of Omar, we have a profound philosophy, so in the “Song of the Open Road” we are dealing with the eternal verities, it is the Parable of the

Perpetual Journey. To understand it is to know that the universe itself is a road for all travelling souls.

"Not I, not anyone else can travel that road for you

You must travel it for yourself."

Whitman's attitude toward Nature stands out in contrast to other Nature poets. He does not conform to the worshipful attitude of Wordsworth; he did not see through it as through a veil to spiritual realities beyond, as Emerson so often does, yet he made more of Nature than any other poet has done, but it was Nature as a whole—not the parts, not the exceptional phases, but the total scheme and unfolding of things. We miss the Tennysonian perfume and technique, the Wordsworthian sweet rusticity, the Emersonian mysticism and charm, the epic grandeur of Milton and the dramatic power of Shakespeare. But in some respects, nearly all our Nature-poets appear holiday flower-gatherers beside this inspired astronomer, geologist, and biologist all in one, sauntering the street loitering on the beach, roaming the mountains, or rapt and silent under the midnight skies.

His aim was to tally "earth's soil, trees, winds and waves": "Can your performance face the open fields and the seaside"? is his searching question to each man's own conscience, and how he answered it to himself can be best seen in his self-reliance—"I am willing to wait to be understood"—nothing could disturb, and which was as deeply ploughed into his life as the force of gravity in Nature. "My commission obeying, to question it never daring; curious enveloped messages delivering. To ages yet the growth of the seed leaving," for "I am sure they really came from Thee, the urge, the arder, the unconquerable will, a message from the Heavens whispering to me." Then "Let the old timbers part, I will cling fast to thee, O God, though the waves buffet me, Thee, Thee to know, Great Comrade."

The moral principles running all through Whitman's writings are

patriotism, liberty, personal freedom; be yourself to yourself a law, belief in your own soul's intuitions; equal honour to the body and the mind; reverence for self, to know that the sun and moon hang in the sky for you, whoever you are; woman the equal of man and to be equally honoured; moral heroism, to confront odds undaunted and abide one's time; faith in Nature, to be joyous as Nature is joyous; sympathy for the ignorant and suffering, not excluding the lowest types.

Is it any wonder that Thoreau says of Whitman—"he suggested something a little more than human." Can you better this experience of Whitman's?—

"I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four; in the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own face in the glass; I find letters from God dropt in the street, and everyone is signed by God's name, I leave them where they are, for I know that where so'er I go others will punctually come for ever and ever."

"I am at peace about God and about death."

"I will return to the celestial sphere where everyone goes in his turn."

Can you improve on this intuition of his—

"It is provided in the essence of things that form any fruition of success no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary."

"Thou poet of unconquerable Life,
Of Universal Hope and Cheer
Blown as a gale from God;
Accept this praise—thy message thrust—
"Are they not all the Seas of God?"
And risk the ship, ourselves and all."

G.V.G.



Lesson Notes.

August 6th. OLD TESTAMENT
PARABLES. VII.—*The Handey of the Potter.* Jer. xviii. 1-10. K
Text, 1s. lxiv. 8.

The potter "throws" a lump of clay onto a "wheel" or small circular table which he rotates by means of a treadle.

He fashions the clay into the desired form, not by removing portions with tools as is done by a turner of wood or brass or iron, etc., but by modeling the whole with his hands as it is whirled between his fingers and thumbs. We often speak of moulding a character or the moulding of a man or a nation. The figure of speech is derived from the potter. It occurs in several scriptures of the bible (eg.—Job x. 9, Is. xlv. 9 and lxiv. 8, Jer. xviii. 1-8, Rom. ix. 21). Sometimes the language of the writer is based upon the breaking of the finished, baked, hardened, pottery, which when broken can no longer be moulded again. Thus, Ps. ii. 9:—

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron,
Thou shalt dash them to pieces like a
potter's vessel.

(Cp. Rev. ii. 27. See also Is. xxx. 14, Jer. xix. 11a).

(Jer. xviii. 1-10). Here the prophet thinks of the clay in its soft (or plastic) state; when the form (representing the "destiny" of the nation—or the course of its history as we sometimes say, using a totally different figure) may be changed. If they repent not of their sins God may make them a vessel unto dishonour, as St. Paul might say, a vessel of wrath fitted unto destruction; whereas if they repent and do well he will change his plan and make them a vessel unto honour, a vessel of mercy prepared unto glory: (Cp. Rom. ix. 21, 22). The view of human characters and fortunes being moulded by God as potter is an imperfect one, improved by the supplementary view of Isaiah that men are children who owe what they are, and what they have the ability or power to make themselves, very largely to God as to a Father, who wills that they shall be well-doing and is willing to help them by knowledge and counsel so to be. (Is. lxiv. 8.)

August 13th. OLD TESTAMENT PARABLES. VIII.—*The Eagles and the Vine.* (zek. xvii. 1-21). Key Text, Ezek. xvii. 8.

(Ezek. xvii. 1-21). This parable should be compared (especially v. 8) with No. V. (July 23rd). As there,

the vine was intended to "bear fruit," and be "a goodly vine," i.e., the people represented by it were intended to do what was right, here in particular a relationship as a subdued monarchy under suzerainty of Babylon.

(v. 2). The epithet "son of man" here (and in some ninety other places in the same book of Ezekiel) expresses (a) condescension of God in employing a mortal man instead of some supernatural messenger, (b) humble human consciousness of relative incompetence. (3) The eagle=Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon: (cp. the eagles of Rome, Germany, Austria, Russia). Cedar-top from Lebanon carried into land of traffic—king Jehoiachin of Judah carried into Babylon. (5) His uncle Zedekiah surrounded by other royal princes ("seed of the land") was made king instead under very favourable conditions, (8, 6) on condition of allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar. But he was disloyal and (7) sought deliverance and protection at the hands of (another eagle)—the king of Egypt. (9) "he"—king of Babylon. (14) "base"—(not villainous but) lowly or humble, as having been effectually humiliated. (Cp. "low stature" v. 6). (15b) Cp. Ps. xv. 4c; 5c. (16) Zedekiah's eyes were put out and he was carried in fetters to Babylon. (See II Kings xxiii. 36—xxv. 11).

August 20th. OLD TESTAMENT PARABLES. IX.—*The Cedar Twig.* Ezek. xviii 22-24. Key Text, Mark iv. 30.

Cp. Mt. xiii 31, 32—Mk. iv, 30-32—Lk. xiii. 18, 19. On turning to Ezekiel's figure of the Cedar Twig (xvii. 22, 23) we find that, that has served in the main as a model for the parable of the Mustard Seed. In both, the small plant grows into a large tree affording shelter for the birds that fly to its branches, typifying the security and peace of the nations that shall flow into the Messianic Kingdom (Is. ii. 2). But an element of originality in the gospel parable consists not merely in the difference of the means of expressing the smallness of the beginning but the difference of that which the smallness signifies. In the Ezekie

figure the cedar-top, the small beginning of the goodly tree, is intended to stand for a prince of the royal house of David transferred from its native land to Babylon. It is a prediction in fact of very much the same order as that of Isaiah (xi. 1 ; 10b) :—

And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit—unto him shall the nations seek ; and his resting place shall be glorious.

The mustard seed on the other hand stands not for the Messiah but for the nucleus of the Messianic kingdom,—the group of the first disciples of Jesus. Ezekiel predicts the foundation of the kingdom of the Messiah ; the parable of the mustard seed predicts the growth of the kingdom of God (or kingdom of heaven), considered as a society, from a very small beginning . The consummation contemplated is much the same in both cases ; but in the gospel parable the Messiah has a less conspicuous place ; in fact no stated place at all except by implication. In this parable the seed stands for the kingdom itself, not as in the parable of the growing wheat and in the parable of the seed sower (or of the sown), for “ the word of the kingdom,” (Mt. xiii. 19). The form of the parable of the mustard seed in Luke and Matthew (for these two say that the plant became “ a tree ” and that the birds “ lodged in the branches thereof ”) is partly due to the description of the tree in the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. 11, 12 :—

The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth. The leaves thereof were fair and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all ; the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the branches thereof, and all flesh was fed of it.

Only that tree typifies not the Messianic Kingdom but merely Nebuchadnezzar in the days when he was a flourishing sovereign.

August 27th. REVISION.

* *

Obituary

Mr. William Morrison of Crossgar.

Our Congregation at Rademon, has suffered a severe loss in the death of Mr. William Morrison, who had been its precentor for fifty-seven years, and for a long period Secretary, and during the whole of his life a deeply interested and useful member. An unfortunate accident brought about by the carelessness of the driver of a horse in Ballynahinch fair resulted in a broken leg. The fractured limb appeared to be doing well, but the shock proved too much for a system weakened by the burden of seventy-five years. After four weeks, complications set in, and the end came quickly. On July 14th he passed away. The funeral which was one of the largest seen in the district, took place on the 17th to Kilmore Parish Church Graveyard. Amongst others, it was attended by the Rev. James Kennedy of Larne, who was ordained in Rademon, fifty-three years ago, and was the intimate and esteemed friend of Mr. Morrison ever since. The Rev. J. A. Kelly, Minister of the congregation for sixteen years, was also present. Revs. R. Philipson, T. Jamison J. Johnston, and other neighbouring clergymen, were in the procession. Mr. Morrison leaves a widow, a son, and four daughters, to whom we tender our deepest sympathy.

In Rademon Meeting House at worship in Sunday Morning, July, 16th, the present minister said :—

There is a place vacant in this congregation which will be most difficult to fill. For more years than any of our present worshippers even remember, William Morrison presided over the praise portion of our services with great efficiency.

He discharged the important duties of Secretary for a long period. In everything connected with the prosperity of this House of Prayer, he took a deep interest, as a member of Committee, his counsel was wise, his views clear, and his readiness to work agreeably with others, pleasing.

He was a father to all of us and placed his knowledge and experience readily at our service. He trained his children to love this ancient House of God. By teaching and example, he encouraged them to appreciate the privileges, and share the responsibilities of our congregational life. But whilst first place in his affections was given to this Society, he followed with deep interest the general concerns of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church. At meetings of Synod in the past, he represented our congregation; and at such popular gatherings as the Sunday School Conferences, his presence was often seen. Our free faith found in him a most loyal supporter. Unitarianism was his creed in life, and his support in the hour of death. He was not a man given to talk about his religion. His kindness to all with whom he was in any way associated was the practical shape which his faith took. William Morrison had his faults. He would have been the last to claim perfection, modesty was one of his characteristics. His faults, however were counter-balanced by virtues of a rare kind. No man enjoyed the esteem of a wider circle of friends. Large is the number of those who acknowledge their indebtedness to his open hand and generous heart. In the community he occupied an influential and important position, which he won by his own ability and faithfulness. He served the public as tax-collector, post-master, and Auctioneer. He merited and enjoyed the confidence of his fellow-men, and none was more trusted. In early life he was most industrious, and hard work had for him no terrors. Success attended his efforts, and his comfortable circumstances were the well deserved reward of his labours.

The genuine sorrow of the community bears witness to the big heart he possessed. William Morrison is not dead. He lives in the spiritual land. He lives in the affectionate remembrance of his congregation. He lives in the good will of all who knew him.

His kindness and generosity will remain as an ideal for all of us, and happy

may we consider ourselves when our end comes, if our demise calls forth the universal regret caused by the passing of William Morrison.



Reports.

Ballyclare. On Wednesday, June 28th the annual Sunday School Excursion was held, the venue being Whitehead. Shortly after 9 a.m., the party left in 3 char-a-bancs picking up additions en route and after a most enjoyable drive by the Commons of Carrick and along the coast road arrived at Whitehead about 11 o'clock. It was a party numbering something over 90 that sat down to lunch in the Brookvale Cafe, though there were some absentees, Miss Jeanie Laird and Mr. Willie Logan two faithful workers in our Sunday School being regrettably absent through illness. Lunch over the party amused themselves in different directions. The day was bright with occasional showers which in no way damped the spirits of the young or interfered with the various forms of amusement. The time passed all too quickly and at 8 p.m., after a second repast, a start was made for home. The return journey via Larne brought to a conclusion a very successful outing. The arrangements for the day were in the capable hands of Messrs. S. J. Bingham and E. Laird.

Banbridge. Our annual Sunday Scholars' "Outing" was very happily spent on Saturday, 1st July. Owing to the unsettled times we had decided that an excursion far afield would be unwise; and owing to the unsettled weather we deemed it also unwise to avail ourselves of Mr. S. Martin's kind offer of a field for a picnic. So we rallied at the Dunbar Memorial School whose walls could tell of many teas, games, laughter, lectures, serious talks and social gatherings of all kinds for old and young, for the last fifty years or more. The ladies had prepared a splendid tea, with sandwiches and buns well ahead of our capacity. The usual, and some new, games were in-

dulged in. The rain clouds passed away about an hour before tea, and many of the boys came out into the playground and enjoyed a game of cricket. This was under bright sunshine, with dazzling rays reflecting from rain water pools and glittering from watery flagstones. There were about eighty young people present. We ended our festivities early in the evening to take part in the annual pilgrimage to the Cenotaph which was erected in the centre of the town and covered with wreaths and cards in memory of those who fell at the first Battle of the Somme. Our children marched with others in procession.

The Unity Tennis Club is still flourishing, a Singles' Tournament being in progress at the time of writing

Belfast Domestic Mission.—The Children's Anniversary and Flower Services were held in the Central Hall, Rosemary Street, on Sunday, June 18th, both services being conducted by the Missionary. A number of favourite festal hymns were selected for the occasion and were rendered very effectively by both Choir and Congregations. Flowers sent by several friends and other contributions from our own members enhanced the appearance of the Hall, and made one feel that it was literally "Flower Sunday." The small attendance at morning service was amply compensated by the large evening congregation, when we were delighted to have with us several friends from other congregations. The collections which were highly satisfactory, were divided between the Children's Hospital and Social Service Girls Club, while flowers were despatched to the Wards of the former Institution.

Clough.—A successful Jumble Sale was held on Friday, June 30th, in the Courthouse, Seaford, in aid of the property fund. The function was organised by Mrs. S. Robinson, Mrs. Hay, and Mrs. Davies, who were ably assisted by Mrs. H. Robinson, Mrs. Haslett, Miss Nelson, Misses Maffett, Miss S. Mitchell, Misses Robinson, Miss

Ferguson, Miss M. Hay, Masters N. and A. Robinson, Jim, George and Jack Hay. Sales were brisk and the function was well patronised. The Courthouse was kindly lent for the occasion by Major Forde.

Prior to the above function and in aid of the same fund, a dance was held in Dundrum Parochical Hall. Mrs. H. Robinson, Mrs. S. Robinson, Mrs. Hay, Mrs. Davies, Mrs. Watts, Mrs. M'Cammon, Misses Ferguson, Misses Irvine, Miss Hogg, were responsible for all the arrangements and they did their work splendidly. The hall was beautifully decorated, and the refreshments were excellent. There was a good gathering, in spite of the fact that the clerk of the weather was extremely unkind, and all enjoyed themselves thoroughly. Mr. E. M'Cullough of Belfast presided at the piano.

On Sunday, July 9th a Children's Floral Service was held. The church had been decorated for the special occasion. As the voluntary was being played at the opening of service, the Sunday Scholars marched in two's up the aisle to the front pews and placed bunches of flowers on the Communion Table.

Special music was rendered by the children, the hymns and tunes being taken from the Belfast Festival programme; an anthem was also rendered. The Minister preached from the appropriate text "Consider the lilies of the field how they grow." The singing was good, and the service was well attended. The special collectors were Masters Jim Hay, Norman Robinson, John Hamilton, Bobbie Wilson, the collection being in aid of the Sunday School Excursion Fund. Miss Irvine presided at the organ. The service was so much enjoyed by the grown ups, that they expressed the hope that a Children's Floral Service will be henceforth an annual institution. This is the first time such a service has been held in the church.

Mountpottinger.—On May 31st, in spite of the great heat prevailing, the Sunday School presented an animated scene on the occasion of the welcome

meeting to the Minister and his bride on their return from honeymoon. After tea had been served the chair was taken by Mr. H. Thomas, who in some well-chosen phrases voiced the sentiments of the congregation. Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., who was present as a guest of the congregation, expressed in his customary happy style the great satisfaction he felt at being present on such an occasion and on behalf of his brother ministers tendered very warm congratulations to the Bridegroom. Mr. Adam Millin, as representing the All Souls Congregation, also tendered his congratulations and remarked that he had always thought well of Mr. Watkins, and now that he himself was living in Co. Down, he hoped to have better opportunity for closer association. Subsequently the Church Treasurer was called upon to present Rev. M. Watkins with a cheque from the members of the congregation in honour of his entry into the ranks of the benedicts. He was followed by Mrs. H. Lamont Orr (the popular "granny" of the congregation) who very graciously presented Mrs. Watkins with handsomely bound copies of the "Ten Services" and "New Hymnal" as a little token of friendship from the congregation. On behalf of the Sunday School, Mrs. J. Johnson, assisted by Misses Dorothy Newman, Violet Martin and Master Harry Townsley, made the formal presentation of a handsome Barometer suitably inscribed. On behalf of himself and his wife Mr. Watkins returned thanks in a humorous speech and assured the assemblage that he had always felt at home in Mountpottinger, and trusted that under the altered conditions he would even be more so. Owing to the early Curfew the proceedings could not be very prolonged, but the quartette and the Church Choir rendered some songs which were much appreciated. A pleasing feature of the evening was the appearance on the platform of a chorus of Sunday School scholars who sang a serenade of welcome to the Bride and Bridegroom, whilst several other little girls came dancing in with

floral tributes which they handed to Mrs. Watkins as they passed her chair. The evening was a pronounced success, and we hope the future will be bright for the bridal couple.

* *

The annual Floral Services were held on Sunday, June 25th, when the Church was tastefully decorated by a band of willing helpers under the leadership of the Minister, who himself conducted the morning and evening service; the special Childrens Services in the afternoon being undertaken by Mr. J. H. Smith, as a farewell to his Mountpottinger friends. On the following Saturday, July 1st, the Sunday School Excursion took place, the venue being once again Moneyrea, and the hospitable quarters so kindly placed at our disposal by Mr. and Mrs. Turkington. Unfortunately the weather was not too favourable, and therefore the accommodation provided by the new loft was very welcome in the morning. Later in the day however, conditions improved a good deal, and thus enabled us to use the field for games. Prior to departure in the evening, a very hearty vote of thanks was moved to Mr. and Mrs. Turkington, by Mr. E. R. Jackson, seconded by Mr. J. Johnston, and was acknowledged in very happy style by our host. On the homeward journey when just past Orangefield, a regrettable accident occurred, this being we believe the first in the history of the Sunday School Excursions. Owing to the violent swaying of the brake through the wheel catching in the tram lines, Miss A. Newman and Mr. E. Mitchell were thrown onto the road, the former being rendered unconscious but the latter fortunately escaping with nothing worse than a bruised knee. We are glad to state that Miss Newman is now quite recovered.

Unity Guild.—We missed our friends from the Mission at our outing to Carnmoney on 17th June, but we knew they were engaged on work connected with their own place of worship, and therefore they could not come. Had they been with us in

their usual numbers the attendance at this, our second excursion, would have been as good as the first. The afternoon was fresh and cool and we started out for the Hill at a good pace. Two of the party, who did not wish to attempt the climb, were given instructions how to get to Fairview (which was the rendezvous for tea) by our clerical guide and left to make the best of their way there. And that was the last we saw of them! They wandered all over the map but could find no Fairview, so eventually made tracks for the tram, and so home. Meanwhile the lay guide had steered us up to the top of Carnmoney Hill, where we were met by a strong cold breeze from which we sheltered in the lee of a hedge, till someone said we would all be frozen if we stayed any longer and the descent began. Our reverend guide, with a somewhat surprising disregard for Scripture, turned both to the left hand and to the right, with the result that the party again got divided, four young men disappearing and everyone being lost. The main body, after vain inquiries from passing strangers and repeated knockings on doors of cottages, inhabited and uninhabited, finally got on to the right road about a mile and a half from our destination which was finally reached about an hour later than was anticipated. A hearty welcome awaited us here from Mr. and Mrs. Lusk and their family. Tea was soon brought out as we lay about on the lawn at the side of the house. As the meal was drawing to a close the four young men re-appeared having tramped all over the countryside in vain attempts to pick up the party. We were then taken over the farm buildings, which are lighted throughout by electricity and wherever possible worked by machinery. It was pleasant to see the capable manner in which Miss Lusk started up the different machines and explained the various processes. After farewells to our kindly hosts and hostesses we made our way to Whiteabbey Station in good time to catch the train for Belfast, all agreeing that the adven-

tures of the afternoon had only added to the enjoyment of the trip.—About three dozen availed themselves of the tea provided by the Guild on June 20th, prior to the Service with which the General Synod opened its proceedings.—By the kind invitation of Mrs. Kell, the Guild visited Ashdene, Comber, on Saturday, 1st July. The party left the Co. Down Station at 3-20. This invitation was only received at the last Committee meeting, so could not be mentioned in the Summer Syllabus card, but there was a better muster than at any previous outing this year. Tennis, Clock-Golf and other outdoor games were provided for our enteritainment, while a sumptuous tea was served on our arrival. The Guild is deeply grateful to our kind hostess and her friends for such an exceedingly enjoyable afternoon.

The Guild will certainly have to get a fresh set of guides after their experience this Summer. It was the president who led them astray at Knockagh. He said he knew the right way but somehow he went wrong, and even when we reached our "destination" he did not know the difference, though we were right away from where the hot water was to have been prepared. After basking about for an hour or so, and no sign of fire or hot water appearing, two of the men went down to a cottage to get water, while the rest gathered sticks to boil it. At the cottage the information was given that we were on the wrong hummock and the party was soon trooping over to the right. Tea was soon ready and taken with good appetite, and afterwards some of the party went to the top of the hill. A move was then made towards Greenisland Station where a train took us to Belfast, a thoroughly enjoyable day having been spent in fine, warm weather.

The next outing is on 2nd September to Holywood. The Holywood Guild has been asked to join us in a ramble over the Hills, so it is hoped that members will turn out in goodly numbers.

Ballycarry.

Special services were conducted in the above church on Sunday, 25th June, the preacher in the morning being the Rev. W. G. Marsden, minister of the congregation, and in the evening the Rev. Edgar I. Fripp, of All Souls, Elmwood, Belfast. There were large congregations, especially at the evening service. At the morning service the Rev. Mr. Marsden preached from the text—Psalm 107, verse 1—“Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it.” He pointed out that these words signified that no wise and good action was possible unless it was moved, and influenced, and guided by the Divine and Holy Spirit of God. A church was an assembly of worshipping people who might meet in the open air or in a private house. It was really God, the great Architect and Builder of the Universe, Who through us, built the church, the home, the school, the city, the nation. And yet with our physical bodies, susceptible to external heat, cold and moisture, we are compelled to erect structures of stone, or brick, or timber for our protection. The preacher then spoke of their old building, with its hallowed associations of men of the past—planters of Ulster—strong resolute men, many of them flying from religious prosecution because their determination above all things to be free Christians. Ejected from the English Establishment of Episcopacy, the ruins of which buildings are now part of the old burying-ground of Ballycarry, they raised that edifice to the worship of Almighty God. They sought help in the sanctuary, and week by week they went forth from that place strengthened by heavenly food to meet the evils of the world, with the light as of the sun upon their daily path of trials and difficulties. Many persons had visited that ancient place of worship out of a reverent curiosity. That day they met for the same purpose as did their fathers so long ago—that they might express and therefore strengthen their faith and confidence in

God. The old school-house was a landmark well known to many who once wended their way there years ago. Two hundred years ago, and still the old school-house stands, and now a new wing has been added, making the building a handsome, well-lighted, commodious place of instruction. They had done that work as a venture of faith, trusting that at some time and somehow the debt would be wiped out. The design and plan of the work, along with the general oversight, were due to the great kindness of a true friend of the congregation, who, though not a member, had given freely and heartily his valuable services. Many living miles away had unselfishly spent days in drawing loads of building material from long distances to that place out of pure love for a cause that appealed to their hearts, and the ladies had been wonderful in their energy, and were still working hard. The craftsman and the builder had found pleasure and interest in their task. Their day-school had had a remarkable reputation for imparting a sound education. In the late Mr. M’Connell’s time as teacher a remarkable success was achieved, and children still came because of that reputation and because of the present principal’s recognized merits as an excellent teacher. The preacher then spoke of the work of the Sunday School and the other aids to the progressive and aggressive work of the church. He deplored the indifference towards religion which was one of the unwholesome fashions of the present times, and emphasised the great benefits which followed to both scholars and teachers from the exercise of religion. They got to know the secret resources of their own souls and the great remedy which God through Christ has provided against evil in all its forms both within and without. There were great difficulties in the work of the Church and Sunday School—difficulties caused by apathy and indifference in or want of knowledge of the great matters at stake. He asked them to labour on patiently and faithfully, keeping pure their inner thought and life and with earnest sincerity in their souls, inspir-

ing all their work and keeping them faithful to the very end.

A very successful bazaar in connection with the Old Presbyterian Church was held on Friday, June, 30th and Saturday, July 1st. On Friday, at 3 o'clock, the bazaar was formally opened by Miss Greenfield, of the Roddens, Larne.

Mr. Samuel Magill, of Larne, was the Chairman. Rev. W. G. Marsden (minister), said there was little need for him or anyone to introduce Mr. Magill, who has acted before on other occasions as chairman, and who was well-known to them as a good friend, of all churches. In his usual characteristically happy style, in introducing Miss Greenfield, Mr. Magill said—I believe to be a good chairman it is well to be brief, therefore I shall go on to my task and I assure you it affords me very great pleasure in being the medium of introducing to the people of Ballycarry Old Congregation and their friends, the lady who has kindly consented to open the sale.

Miss Greenfield, rising amid applause, said, I am exceedingly glad to be here to-day to witness your renewed crusade which strikes at the fundamental cause of the failures and miseries of civilization. You have a long and honourable record behind you, but we are now at the parting of the ways and I am one of those people who look forward to a time when education, will become the central concern of every civilized community.

The dominant interests of the moment are the economic and the political, and the position of education is that of a subsidiary or satellite to both. These interests are highly important, but in order to make our place as good citizens in a well ordered state, we must be educated to understand those interests intelligently and not the easy prey of every glib tongued politician. In the regeneration of this country the country school is going to play a great part. Ireland is an agricultural country; we learned from the world war the farmer cannot be done without, but in order that the fruits of his labour shall not be exploited by the

sharp witted business man, he MUST EDUCATE his family. These bright young girls I see before me to-day have the regeneration of the country in their hands. But we must see to it that we give them a better chance than we have have had, I would like to see the primary, secondary, and higher schools treated as parts of a unitary whole, not forgetting that the primary is the most important, for there the foundation of our future is laid. I feel that from this beautifully lighted and equipped school, a good influence will radiate and you will be rewarded for any sacrifice you have made on its behalf. I wish Mr. Marsden could have more influential person to open this sale, but I can assure you I esteem it a privilege to do so, and I trust you may soon be free of debt.

Miss Greenfield was then presented with a bouquet by Miss Service, senior teacher of the Sunday School. The minister then proposed a vote of thanks thanks to the opener, which was seconded by Mr. Calwell. On the Rev. David Steen entering the hall he was asked to second a vote of thanks to the chairman, which he said he had much pleasure in doing.

On the second day (Saturday) the minister, proposing Captain Dundee, M.B., to the chair, said there was even less need that day to introduce the chairman. Captain Dundee, introducing the meeting opener Mrs. Edward Sturdy.

Mrs. Edward Sturdy, in opening the bazaar, said that it gave her great pleasure to be there that day, and to declare open that sale of work, which was being held for so worthy an object as the education of the children of the district.

At the close of her speech she was presented with a bouquet by Miss M'Meekin, the oldest teacher in the Sunday School, with whom both Mrs. Sturdy and Captain shook hands amidst the applause of the gathering.

Rev. W. G. Marsden, in proposing a combined vote of thanks to Captain Dundee and Mrs. Sturdy, spoke of the great kindness of the opener and of her husband, Mr. Edward Sturdy, who

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were both ever ready to lend a helping hand in any worthy cause throughout that district.

OUR CHURCH AND THE KING.

At the meetings of the General Synod in June, the following telegram of congratulation on the safe return of the Prince of Wales, was sent to His Majesty:

To the King's Most Excellent Majesty. May it please your Majesty,

The General Synod of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland at this time assembled, desires with humble duty to your Majesty and Her Gracious Majesty the Queen, to tender hereby a most hearty congratulation on the happy return home of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, after many months of various travel during which his charming and princely personality has greatly endeared him to your Majesty's loving and loyal subjects in widely spread regions of your Majesty's Dominions abroad.

The Synod joins in fervent Prayer that the richest favours of the Divine blessing may continuously be bestowed upon your Majesty, Her Majesty, His Royal Highness, and every member of your Royal House.

Signed on behalf of the General Synod.

EUSTACE THOMPSON, Moderator.

GEORGE J. SLIPPER, Clerk.

The following gracious message was telegraphed in reply.

Buckingham Palace.

Reverend G. Slipper, Clerk, General Synod, Belfast. The King sincerely thanks the General Synod of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland now assembled for their kind message of congratulations and for the generous references to the Prince of Wales which it contains.

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